

REMARKS

Claims 1-12, 14-18 and 20-50 are pending in the present application with claims 4-6, 11, 12, 28-31 and 36 being withdrawn from consideration as being drawn to non-elected subject matter.

The Examiner has rejected the claims under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Checa. In addition, the Examiner has rejected a number of claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Checa in view of a number of other references. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections on the following grounds.

The Examiner contends that the cited reference discloses a separable connection; however, Applicants respectfully submit that the cited reference does not stand for such a proposition. The release device in Checa is not separable in the same manner that the claimed release device is separable.

Although the clutch cover 22 is connected to the roller bearing 1b by means of a clip ring 70 that can be released, it is not possible to separate the release device 50 from the clutch cover within the confines of the clutch space during a repair in which the engine has to be separated from the transmission. Applicants further submit that the clutch disclosed by Checa is a pull-actuated clutch where the ball bearing 1a has axially fixed connections to the tongs of the diaphragm spring of the clutch. The ball bearing 1a, in turn, has an axially fixed connection to the piston of the slave cylinder by means of the end stop so that in order to separate the release device from the clutch cover during a repair, the entire transmission would have to be disassembled. The separation of the engine from the transmission according to Checa would therefore have to be realized in such a manner that the clutch including the axial space filled by the release device can

be pulled off the transmission input shaft. This can be a big disadvantage or it can even be impossible, especially if the axial space is limited in a confined installation arrangement of the engine/transmission unit.

To avoid the foregoing problem, the present application describes an arrangement that allows the release device to be separated in a simple manner from the clutch cover so that only the clutch with its shorter axial dimension has to be maneuvered off the transmission input shaft, which requires commensurately less axial space for separating the engine from the transmission.

Based on the foregoing, the rejection of the independent claims 1 and 42 should be withdrawn since there is at least one feature that is not disclosed in the Checa reference.

The rejections of the dependent claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are moot in view of the above comments as well as those set forth below.

Claims 2-3, 7-10, 14-18, 20-27 and 32-41 should be allowed as depending from what should be an allowed independent claim 1.

Claim 42 is an independent claim that recites a power train and includes an actor as well as means for separably coupling said actor with said housing. Applicants respectfully submit that for the reasons set forth above in detail in the discussion of claim 1, the Checa reference fails to include means for reversibly and separably coupling the actor with the housing since the release device in Checa is not separable. For at least this reason, reconsideration and allowance of claim 42 are respectfully requested.

Claims 43-50 should be allowed as depending from what should be an allowed independent claim 42, as amended.

